THE TENNESSEE WARBLER

Newsletter of the Tennessee Ornithological Society

April, 2024 Editor, Theresa Graham

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE - SPRING 2024

Greetings from Memphis! My family and I returned to Memphis after spending six months in Ecuador, and as much as we enjoyed our time there, we are happy to be back in Tennessee. I wrote this message in mid-March, and spring has arrived in west Tennessee. The redbuds and dogwoods are blooming, shrubs and trees are leafing out, and last week, I saw an American Robin carrying nesting material. Our breeding birds will be on eggs soon, and our winter visitors will depart for their breeding grounds farther north (how I miss the departure of Cedar Waxwings!). Over the next couple of months, Neotropical migrants will return from their wintering grounds. Some species will stay for the summer to breed, and others will migrate through, delighting us for just a few weeks. Time to get out and bird, either individually or with friends. **Knoxville will host the Spring meeting April 26th – 28th, and the birding should be fantastic.** I hope to see many of you there!

I would like to share with you a couple bird-related articles that I saw last week. First, a bilateral gynandromorph Green Honeycreeper was spotted in Colombia. In a bilateral gynandromorph, one half of the body shows male characteristics, and the other half exhibits female traits. Bilateral gynandromorphism is a rare phenomenon that occurs in birds and in some invertebrates (but not in mammals). In these groups, sexual characteristics are driven by the ZW-sex determination system, a chromosomal system with ZZ males and ZW females (vs. the XY system in humans). The ZW-sex system is less influenced by hormones, allowing errors in cell division to result in an individual that is half male and half female. To see such a colorful and sexually dimorphic bird like a Green Honeycreeper display bilateral gynandromorphism was a rare treat!

The second article that I would like to share is a story about Peter Kaestner. On February 9, Mr. Kaestner saw an Orange-tufted Spiderhunter in the Philippines and became the first person ever to have observed 10,000 bird species. Remarkable! I am only about 8,500 species out of first place. Let's get out to bird and close the gap!

Have a wonderful Spring and Summer, and Good Birding!
Warmly,
Michael Collins
President, TOS

TOS SPRING MEETING
April 26-28, 2024

Join us in Knoxville for the TOS Spring Meeting April 26-28, 2024. Great birding, great people, great part of the state, what's not to like?

We'll have a Friday evening reception, field trips Saturday and Sunday mornings (and possibly a Saturday afternoon outing), Board of Directors meeting Saturday afternoon, and a banquet and plenary speaker on Saturday evening. Saturday's business meeting, dinner, and speaker will be on the grounds of the historic Ramsay House (https://www.ramseyhouse.org/) in east Knoxville. We will only be able to accommodate 70 people for the dinner and speaker program on Saturday evening, so register soon.

KTOS will provide a potluck dinner on Friday night at the Hampton Inn Knoxville -East (7445 Sawyer Lane, Knoxville, 37924, 865-525-3511) from 6:30-8:30 pm for those not looking to search up a local restaurant. Registration packets, name badges, and field trip sign-ups will be available during the reception as well as in the morning prior to field trips.

Our speaker will be Tiffany Kersten of Nature Ninja Birding Tours. Tiffany is a professional bird guide based in the Rio Grande Valley of Texas. She is a Wildlife Ecologist, certified Interpretive Guide, and long-time environmental educator. She did a Lower 48 States Big Year in 2021, and her presentation "Birdie Big Year: Elevating Women Birders" will touch on the adventures inherent in such an endeavor with emphasis on a woman's perspective and the special challenges women face chasing birds near and far. Learn more about Tiffany at https://tiffanykersten.blogspot.com/p/contact.html.

The host hotel will be the Hampton Inn Knoxville-East (7445 Sawyer Lane, Knoxville, 37924, 865-525-3511). The Friday reception will be at the Hampton, and all field trips will leave from there. This is at Exit 398 off of I-40. A room block is being held at the Hampton at a rate of $149/night. Use this link to reserve a room:
https://www.hilton.com/en/attend-my-event/tyseahx-tos-b8a70f51-b196-468f-a542-bdea11d2815f/

There are a number of other hotels available at Exit 398.

Dinner on Saturday evening will be catered by Bissel Catering (https://www.bisselcatering.com/). The menu will include grilled chicken, pork tenderloin, grilled portobello mushrooms (for non-meat eaters), red mashed potatoes, green beans with almonds, house salad, rolls, and banana pudding.

Expect Saturday and Sunday morning field trips to local hotspots including Sharps Ridge and Seven Islands State Birding Park, among others.

TOS Spring Meeting Registration

Name(s) of attendees _____

Contact info (phone or email) _____

TOS Chapter affiliation (n/a if none) _____

Number of attendees _____ x $10 per person registration fee = _____

Number for Saturday dinner _____ x $22 per person = _____

Dinner preference: meat _____ vegetarian _____

Total: Registration _____ + Dinner _____ = _____

To register, complete the registration form and mail it and payment to:

KTOS (c/o Dawn Headrick)
1512 Hall Acres Drive
Knoxville, TN 37918
Make checks payable to KTOS.

Questions? Email Chris Welsh or Dawn Headrick (cwelsh@retiree.utk.edu; mdheadrick@aol.com)

We hope to see you in Knoxville in April!!

RED KNOTS AND HORSESHOE CRABS

Each spring Red Knots travel from as far as the southern tip of Argentina to the Arctic Circle. This Hemispheric journey can be more than 9,000 miles, one way! To survive the long migration, Red Knots stop over on the Atlantic Coast to feed horseshoe crab eggs. The nutrient dense eggs help Red Knots gain weight and fly to their final destination. Horseshoe crabs are therefore critical to the survival of Red Knots.

An unexpected connection to bird conservation is the safety of endotoxin tests. Endotoxin testing ensures that medical devices and injectable drugs, like knee replacements and vaccines are free from harmful bacteria. Currently, most endotoxin tests are created using horseshoe crab blood. Overharvesting of the horseshoe crab for this purpose, as well as bait use, has led to a profound decline in this prehistoric species. A synthetic alternative to horseshoe crab blood is already being used in Europe, but U.S. companies have shown reluctance to using the alternative.

Fortunately, Representative Frank Pallone, Jr. (D-NJ06) is working on guidelines to make it easier for the biopharmaceutical industry to use endotoxin tests that do not harm horseshoe crabs. Updates will follow.

Source: American Bird Conservancy (www.abcbirds.org)

Editor's note: TOS is a member organization of ABC.

GLOBAL BIG DAY MAY 11, 2024

Coinciding with World Migratory Bird Day, the Global Big Day is a worldwide effort to observe and record as many bird species within a 24 hour period as possible. By participating, you will not only enjoy a day of bird watching, but you also contribute to global bird conservation efforts.

Participants contribute valuable data to eBird, the citizen science project that collects bird observations from all over the globe. By reporting your observations using eBird, you help scientists track bird populations, migration patterns and conservation efforts.

During Global Big Day last year, 61,000 observers from 199 countries submitted 156,000 checklists, reporting 7,700 species. Tennessee birders submitted 1,209 of those checklists, reporting 221 species.

Please join the effort this year. Every sighting counts.

Source: Cornell University Lab of Ornithology (eBird)

For more information: www.ebird.org

THE GREAT BACKYARD BIRD COUNT 2024

The 27th Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC) was conducted February 16th through February 19th. What started as a true backyard count has evolved into a global effort to add to our knowledge of bird populations and their distribution.

Using eBird to submit their checklists, over 642,003 observers from 210 countries and regions entered 384,416 checklists. Observers reported 7,920 species, seventy-one percent of the world's roughly 11,100 species. Observers in the United States submitted the most checklists (173,577), followed by India (63,822) and Canada (25,586). Observers in Colombia reported the most species (1,370), followed by Ecuador (1,129), India (1,039), Brazil (1,012), and Peru (955). Observers in The United States reported 676 species, which ranked 9th among nations. California led with 380 species, followed by Texas (378), Florida (309), Arizona (277) and Louisiana (230). California also led with 12,950 checklists submitted, followed by Florida (10,063), Texas (9,869), New York (9,826) and Pennsylvania (8,578). Tennessee bird watchers submitted 3,177 checklists, containing 147 species (25th among states). At least one checklist was submitted from 92 of our 95 counties. Davidson County birders submitted the most checklists (351) followed by Shelby (314), Knox (276), Hamilton (237) and Williamson (187). Shelby County observers reported the most species (106) just beating Hamilton (104) and Davidson (103). Blount (101) and Henry (97) rounded out the top five.

Among Tennessee birders, Roi and Debbie Shannon submitted 50 checklists, followed by Alan Troyer (28). Alan Troyer also reported the most species (104), followed by Ruben Stoll (93), Roi and Debbie Shannon (91), Cameron Rutt (90), Joseph Hall (82), Tim Lenz (80) and Tommie Rogers (79).

Among the more unusual species reported in Tennessee: Long-tailed Duck, White-winged Scoter, Red-throated Loon, Neotropic Cormorant, Common Gallinule and Golden Eagle. Exotic/escapees that did not make the official list included Mute Swan and Muscovy Duck.

The 28th GBBC will be held February 14th through February 17th, 2025.

More information may be found at: www.birdcount.org

Editor's note: Totals are as of press time. Minor changes can be expected.

CONSERVATION NOTE

The Senate Environment and Public Works Committee has moved forward a bipartisan bill (S.3971) that would benefit birds by reauthorizing funding for programs to conserve wetlands across the country and North America, conservation efforts in the Chesapeake Bay region, partnerships to protect fish habitats, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and more. The America's Conservation Enhancement Reauthorization Act – also known as the ACE Act – was introduced by Senators Tom Carper (D-DEL) and Shelley Moore (R-W.VA).

In addition to reauthorizing programs in the Chesapeake Bay, the legislation would reauthorize the North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA). Since 1991, the NAWCA program has been a highly popular and successful conservation effort that protects and restores wetlands and associated habitats. It has leveraged more than $4 billion to benefit more than 31 million acres from 3,200 projects in the U.S., Canada and Mexico, contributing to the long-term recovery of many wetland-dependent birds.

Neither of Tennessee's two Senators is among the nine co-sponsors. Updates will be provided.

Source: National Audubon Society: www.audubonconnect@audubon.org

The full text of the bill can be found at: www.govtrack.us

Progress of the bill can be tracked at: www.congress.gov (S.3791)

A NEW CONSERVATION ORGANIZATION FOR WEST TENNESSEE

I am taking the opportunity to share good news about a brand new nonprofit in West Tennessee focused on protecting the values of the Hatchie River, the "only unchannelized major tributary to the lower Mississippi River!"

Announcing the new Hatchie River Conservancy: hyperlocal, committed to preserving natural and cultural values, working collaboratively and inclusively! Bob Ford, whom I'm sure some of you know, has been a driving force behind this. Also, you might find photos taken by one or two of our members on the site!

I predict the Hatchie Bird Fest will be a particularly fun one this year!

Please share this news widely!
Gregg Elliott

https://www.hatchieriver.org/

DONATIONS, MEMORIAL, AND HONORARIA

Pam Lasley, TOS Treasurer

TOS received the following donations, memorial, and honoraria in 2023:

Bequests

The Estate of John Richards Hay III
The Estate of Robert Preston Maynard

In appreciation for Discover Birds Activity Books

Kristen Farrington
Kathleen Britts
City of Covington, TN

General Donations

Janie Finch
Heather Koch
Jennifer and Jay Mills Foundation

CHRISTMAS COUNT DATA DUE

Christmas bird count data are due as soon as possible to allow me to get my report in to the editor of *The Migrant* in a timely fashion. Besides the actual count data, please be sure to include the following effort data:

1 - Hours and miles by car, foot, and any night-birding

2 - Number of observers and parties

3 - Any feeder watching hours & names

4 - Start and end times for the count

5 - Weather data for the count

6 - Names of all the participants

7 - Anything else about the count, i.e., record high or low numbers, extraordinary weather, all-time species total for your count, etc.

If you do not have a local compiler, you can send the data directly to me at the address/email below.

TOS appreciates your efforts to record and track our bird populations and abundance. Thanks for helping us to archive this data for future generations and researchers.

Ron Hoff • TOS State Count Compiler
166 Chahyga Way • Loudon, TN 37774 • 865-567-9679
webe2brdrs@gmail.com

Southeastern Avian Winter Hummingbird Report 2023-24 Season

By Cyndi Routledge

The 2023-24 Winter Hummingbird season concluded on March 15th. It was a slower than normal season for winter hummingbirds in our permitted areas. We had a total of 9 sightings and were able to get 6 of those individuals banded. At this point we hypothesize that the continuing severe drought and fires out West are impacting all species, including hummingbirds. We received reports from our western colleagues of many failed nests, and the early departure of many adults. Time will tell if this trend will continue. We'll be watching closely.

The 3 sightings of the hummers that went 'unbanded' took place in Columbia, Germantown and Millington, Tennessee. All 3 of these birds were either one-day wonders or left before arrangements could be made to travel and band them. But thanks to photography we have their presence documented.

We were able to band 6 winter hummers of three different species in 3 different states this season. In Tennessee we had an adult female Rufous in Madisonville, a very late juvenile female Ruby-throat in Clarksville, and a second year (SY) male Black-chinned Hummingbird in Germantown. In Mississippi we banded a juvenile male Rufous and a juvenile male, Black-chinned hummer on the same day in Jackson. And finally, we banded a young female Rufous in Murray, Kentucky in early December.

Hummer host Nancy Haverstock with hatch-year male Rufous Hummingbird that visited her home. Photo Credit: Hap Chambers

Of note was our adventure in Germantown at the home of fellow TOS member, Sarita Joshi where we banded the SY male Black-chinned. We visited her yard on January 6th. As the snow and ice began to set in a few days later, Sarita sent me a picture of a second winter hummingbird, which we confirmed was a female Selasphorus hummingbird, most likely Rufous. Unfortunately, that bird was only seen and photographed on one day and weather conditions prohibited us from traveling back down there. Thanks to Sarita's quick camera skills, we have pictures of both the Rufous and the Black-chinned Hummingbirds feeding on the same feeder! Truly an exciting event.

As always, many thanks to everyone who maintained a feeder all winter and for those hosts who called and allowed us to come band their special guests. We couldn't conduct our research without you.

CHAPTER NEWS

The **J. WALLACE COFFEY CHAPTER – Bristol Bird Club** started the four month segment, November – February, with some fun field trips and great leaders. In November and January Roy Knipsel led walks at the Weir Dam and other water hot spots near Holston Lake. Also in November, Adrianna Nelson led a productive walk at Sugar Hollow Park in Bristol. Some members of the BBC participated in the Roan Mt. Winter Naturalist Rally in February. President Debi Campbell led an afternoon walk at this event which was very successful. Our last walk in February was to Burke's Garden in Tazewell Co., Virginia led by Larry McDaniel and Joe McGuiness.

As usual, in December the BBC was busy with Christmas bird counts which included Bristol, Glade Spring, Shady Valley and Mountain City. Our compiler and coordinator, Richard Lewis does a great job every year finalizing reports for this.

BBC members continue to enjoy great programs at our monthly meetings. In November Wes Anderson, a graduate student at ETSU, presented "Birds of Prey and Fungal Dispersion". Kera Brewster, owner of Wild Birds Unlimited, gave a presentation video in January on "The Joy of Birding" which gave good information about different ways to feed our birds. In February Dave Gardner presented "The Outer Banks Revisited" including a report and many good photos on their pelagic trip through Pamlico Sound in North Carolina.

Unusual bird sightings included a flock of 49 Common Loons seen at Rural Retreat Lake, a Mexican Violetear at a feeder in Carroll Co., a female Rufous Hummingbird at a feeder in Rugby, and a leucistic Junco in Grayson Co. Many people flocked to see the Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch in Amherst Co. at the Mt. Pleasant Recreation Area. All of these sightings were in Virginia.

Judy Moose, Secretary

The **BIRDING KINGSPORT CHAPTER** continues to stay active even in colder months. Our November program was "Bird Migration across the Gulf of Mexico" given by Rick Knight. It was very interesting and offered a different perspective of birding. While working for LSU, Rick did bird research on an oil rig for several years, mostly in Louisiana. In late November, we decorated a Christmas tree using a bird theme for an annual downtown event "Christmas in Kingsport". It was good advertising for our club and a fun project. On December 2, we partnered with Wild Birds Unlimited in Johnson City to participate in Exchange Place's "Christmas in the Country". We had fun making pine cone bird feeders with little kids and adults too! Seven members enjoyed a morning of birding at Warriors Path State Park on December 7. On the 9th, we had our annual Holiday Social attended by 22 people. We had great food and fellowship. On December 14, we had another social event we called "Birds & Brews and Christmas Trees Too". Thirteen of us enjoyed seeing all the Christmas Trees displayed at night. On December 19, we did our annual Audubon Christmas Bird Count. We tallied 71 species on a cold winter day. This was only a decrease of one species from our 2022 count.

Our January program was "Spring Birds of the Southwest" presented by Belinda Bridwell. She shared great bird pictures of all the places she and George visited. Our attendance that evening was 31. In celebration of the Great Backyard Bird Count, we had a bird walk to Weir Dam and nearby hot spots on February 16 and tallied 36 species. We had really good looks at Buffleheads, Ruddy Ducks, an American Black Duck, as well as other species. On February 20, we were invited to meet with 12 representatives from our city Parks & Recreation group. We met them on the Greenbelt and talked about Birding Kingsport, our activities, birding signs along the trail, etc. They got to see several birds with our spotting scope. Our February program was "Wisconsin Birding and Bird Environment 'Enhancement' Projects" by Roy Knispel. It was an enjoyable presentation. On March 7, 15 folks came out for a bird walk at Warriors' Path State Park. We tallied 36 species.

Leadership Team

CHAPTER NEWS

The **HIGHLAND RIM CHAPTER (HRC)** kicked off the season with our annual pitch-in at the home of Darrell and Jean Gibson. As if on cue their wildlife visitors graced us with their presence in the Gibson's backyard while we enjoyed our food and fellowship. We received our new HRC/TOS handbook, put together by Murray and Cheryl King. Our booklet had a lot of extras for us this year. There were pictures to identify eggs and match nesting to the correct bird. An easy suet recipe was also included.

September was our 2nd annual pontoon boat ride on Tims Ford Lake. The weather was perfect and we needed two pontoon boats for our turnout. Along with local birds, ducks and Canada Geese, we saw an Anhinga.

In October our guest speaker Don Hazel who presented "Rarely Seen" animals in Tennessee that can be spotted in our backyards. These include insects, spiders and small animals we might not normally be looking for. He tied this in with our feathered friends and how all of nature is connected.

Before our November meeting we checked and cleaned our bluebird houses on Taylor Creek Greenway in preparation for next season's residents. Our guest speaker was Richard Candler, co-author of *Birding Sewanee*. Richard talked about his experience as an avid birder and shared several of his favorite birding spots in the area. We also had the opportunity to buy a signed book. All profits from the book sale will go towards an Ornithological Project Fund/Grant at the University of the South in Sewanee.

December was our annual Christmas buffet hosted by the Harmony Cumberland Presbyterian Church in Lynchburg. After our delicious meal we assigned teams and routes for our upcoming Christmas bird count. We were fortunate to have all our area covered this year.

Before the beginning of the year a few of us visited the Joe Wheeler National Wildlife Refuge in Alabama. Along with Mallards, Wood Ducks, Eagles, and smaller local birds we were blessed to see hundreds if not thousands of Sandhill Cranes and ten Whooping Cranes. The sound of all the cranes is the best!

In January Lyle and Valerie Russell hosted another great "Owls and Raptors" program. They do a great job rescuing and rehabilitating these birds of prey. Valerie shared a lot of fun facts about owls and brought a few of their non releasable owls for us to admire and appreciate. Such beautiful birds.

Reeda Best was our speaker in February. Her presentation about bluebirds included how to set up our backyards and bluebird boxes to help attract and help our feathered friends. She had excellent tips on the usefulness of various predator guards. Without the proper predator guard a cat, raccoon, squirrel, other birds and snakes can attack and kill the baby birds, even the mama bird. If possible, use a baffle along with your entrance guard.

Happy Birding,
Janie Denis, Secretary

Peanut Butter Suet

1 cup crunchy peanut butter
2 cups quick cook oatmeal
2 cups cornmeal
1 ½ cups lard
1 cup white flour
1/3 cup sugar

Melt the peanut butter and lard together in a pan over low heat, mix in remaining ingredients (while on low heat).

Press mixture into a square or rectangular cake pan. About 1 inch thick or the thickness of your suet feeder.

Freeze for an hour, cut into squares that will fit your feeder.

Store extra squares in the freezer.

CHAPTER NEWS

The **KNOXVILLE CHAPTER** of TOS (KTOS) has been continuing to try to increase membership and attendance at meetings and field trips.

KTOS members are continuing to plan and make accommodations for the annual Spring TOS meeting to be held in Knoxville, TN April 26-28, 2024. We look forward to hosting fellow birders from other chapters of TOS from across the state!

Field trips over the winter season have included guided bird walks at Kyker Bottoms, Gupton Wetlands, Hiwassee Wildlife Refuge, Seven Islands State Birding Park, and Ijams Nature Center. The most recent highlight has been seeing American Woodcock at Seven Islands State Birding Park at sunset calling and performing their mating rituals.

Speakers for the winter KTOS meetings have included Cheryl Greenacre talking about Avian Influenza and other diseases, as well as Ellie Burken talking about Northern Bobwhite Quail biology and management.

KTOS members helped out with several Christmas Bird Counts in the surrounding areas, including Great Smoky Mountains CBC, Cades Cove CBC, Norris CBC, East Knox CBC, and Knoxville CBC.

Stephanie Mueller
KTOS Secretary

July 15th Deadline

The deadline date for the August issue of *The Tennessee Warbler* is July 15th. Please submit all articles, announcements, reports and items of interest by this deadline date.

Submit Material To:

Theresa Graham, Editor
PO Box 366, Oakland TN 38060
(901) 489-0795
e-mail: 2graham@bellsouth.net

The **MEMPHIS CHAPTER** of TOS enjoyed a number of excellent presentations at our monthly meetings. Each of the presenters are active members in the Memphis chapter. In an effort to capture those inadvertently omitted in the last Tennessee Warbler publication, I will be brief in my description.

The September meeting featured David Hill and Dick Preston and their program on Eastern Bluebird conservation and management. It included an overview of nest box construction and placement as well as their efforts regionally in support of the species.

The October program featured ornithologist Cameron Rutt, who is the science coordinator of the American Bird Conservancy's Lost Birds Project. His topic was "Insectivorous Mixed Species Flocks Around the World", highlighting those encountered by local birders.

At our November meeting, Ryan Pudwell, President of the local Nonconnah Creek Conservancy, reviewed the objectives of the Conservancy and encouraged members to get involved in this organization's important conservation initiatives.

In December, Shelby Green, a master's degree student in the University of Memphis biology department, reviewed her efforts in concert with Delta Wind Birds, Bird Safe Memphis, and her master's research project focusing on the Prothonotary Warbler and Carolina Wren, highlighting nest parasitism and predation.

Due to inclement weather, the January meeting was cancelled.

The February program was presented by Cathy Justis, who is the Director of Education for the Wolf River Conservancy. She provided a broad overview of the Conservancy's history, its educational objectives, and the current projects of this essential and influential organization.

Jim Varner, President

CHAPTER NEWS

As always it has been a busy time for our **NASHVILLE CHAPTER**. We held our two annual Christmas bird counts, one in December and the other on New Year's Day. Many thanks to Richard Conners, Tarcila Fox and Scott Block for making them happen and to all who participated.

We welcomed a new Program Director, Cherie Parker, as 2024 began. She, along with outgoing Program chair Susie Russenberger, have already lined up many great programs for 2024. If you have a program you'd like to share with our Chapter, please contact Cherie (cherieparker726@comcast.net) and let her know. We'd love to have you!

Our Field trip coordinator, Mike Smith, continues to put together new and exciting field trips. Each one is announced on the NTOS and TOS webpage, and if you're in the area we'd love for you to join us. The more the merrier.

Our Radnor Lake Wednesday morning migration walks will begin on April 17th and run through May 8th. Each walk begins at 7:30 am outside the Visitor's Center off Otter Creek Rd. An NTOS volunteer will be there to greet the group, keep the list of birds seen and heard, and keep everyone moving along the trial each Wednesday. Join us if you're interested and in the area. Radnor Lake can be a magical place for migrants each spring and fall.

NTOS will also be participating in Metro Nashville's Migratory Bird Day Celebration at Bells Bend Park on May 18th (one week after the 'official' Migratory Bird Day celebration). We invite you to stop on by and partake in all the wonderful activities and programs Metro Staff has organized.

Until next time…
Happy spring migration and good birding!
Cyndi Routledge
NTOS President

As our days get a bit warmer, I'm sure everyone is looking forward to the spring migration. The **CHATTANOOGA CHAPTER** is planning several field trips throughout the spring, and I encourage everyone to take advantage of what fellow CTOS members have to offer.

Speaking of field trips, for 70 years, CTOS birders have been educating each other as well as interested members of the public through our many trips. As a matter of fact, part of our mission statement reads: "The objective of this Chapter shall be to promote the study of birds in the Chattanooga area…."

In addition to field trips, however, we're pursuing other ways of promoting the study and love of birds. CTOS offered a beginning birders workshop recently, led by Kevin Calhoun, for a group of folks, young and old, at Audubon Acres as part of their Great Backyard Bird Count of 2024. Dr. David Aborn also presented a bird banding workshop. Barbara Johnson and I also met with students at Ivy Academy last month to introduce them to birding and demonstrate how best to go about looking for birds and identifying them. Later in March a group of CTOS members met with over 100 first graders at East Ridge Elementary to talk about birds and advise them in their project to build feeders. We'll be providing them the poles from which they'll hang their feeders outside their classroom windows.

For the February meeting, Laura Marsh spoke about "Bird Banding: A Model for Research Tourism". Laura (MSc) is a field ornithologist and conservation biologist.

Sherry Teas from Camp Wildernest was the speaker for our March meeting. Sherry is the only songbird rehabilitator in the Chattanooga area. Their busy season is about to start as the nesting season brings a lot of orphaned nestlings.

OJ Morgan, President